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TO THE CONGRESS
OF
THE UNITED STATES.

A
PETITION AND PROTEST

Against

*SECTARIAN APPROPRIATIONS FOR INDIAN EDUCA-
TION, AND ESPECIALLY AGAINST THE IN-
CREASE OF SUCH APPROPRIATIONS.*

BY

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE

FOR THE

PROTECTION OF AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS.

JANUARY, 1891.

ROOMS 43 AND 44,
MORSE BUILDING, 140 NASSAU STREET
NEW YORK CITY.

PETITION AND PROTEST.

A respectful perusal is requested.

The objects for which the Association which we represent exists, are thus stated in Article II of the Constitution :

“The objects of the League are to secure constitutional and legislative safeguards for the protection of the common-school system and other American institutions, and to promote public instruction in harmony with such institutions, and to prevent all sectarian or denominational appropriations of public funds.”

We are seeking to promote the passage of the following amendment to the United States Constitution, to be known as the XVI Amendment :

“No State shall pass any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or use its property or credit, or any money raised by taxation, or authorize either to be used, for the purpose of founding, maintaining or aiding, by appropriation, payment for services, expenses, or otherwise, any church, religious denomination or religious society, or any institution, society, or undertaking which is wholly, or in part, under sectarian or ecclesiastical control.”

We also seek the amendment of the constitutions of the various States, in conformity with the fundamental principle that in this country the functions of the Church and the State are, and should be kept, distinct and separate. We believe that it was unquestionably the intention of the founders of the Republic to secure the free and untrammelled development of religious belief, without hindrance from State control or help from State patronage. The first amendment to the United States Constitution, which was proposed by Congress to the Legislatures of the various States September 25, 1789, and which was ratified September, 1789 to 1791, contains the following provision :

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

The object of this Amendment was, to exclude from the consideration of Congress any proposed law “respecting an establishment of religion.” Each Church was to be left free to work out its own destiny without Governmental interference or aid. On various pleas, however, this principle has been departed from, in both National and State Legislatures, by grants of public money which was collected from the whole people, for aiding charitable or educational institutions which are under sectarian control. The principle being virtually allowed that if one denomination received such aid, another might claim and receive the same, the amount bestowed in each case depending not only on the facilities of each denomination for doing such work, but also on the aggressiveness and political influence of the petitioners. The growth of this evil custom, so diametrically opposed to the fundamental principles of the Constitution, and so threatening to the peace of the community by introducing questions of denominational preference into our civil legislation, is illustrated by the following table, which shows the amounts appropriated to various religious bodies for the support of Indian schools during the fiscal years from 1886 to 1891 :

	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.
Roman Catholic.....	\$118,343	\$194,635	\$221,169	\$347,672	\$356,957	\$363,349
Presbyterian	32,995	37,910	36,500	41,825	47,650	44,850
Congregational	16,121	26,696	26,080	29,310	28,459	27,271
Martinsburgh, Pa.....	5,400	10,410	7,500	Dropped.		
Alaska Training School.....		4,175	4,175			
Episcopal.....		1,890	3,690	18,700	24,876	29,910
Friends.....	1,960	27,845	14,460	23,383	23,883	24,743
Mennonite.....		3,340	2,500	3,125	4,375	4,375
Middletown, Cal.....		1,523	Dropped.			
Unitarian.....		1,350	5,400	5,400	5,400	5,400
Lutheran, Wittenberg, Wis.....			1,350	4,050	7,560	9,180
Methodist.....				2,725	9,940	6,700
Miss Howard.....				275	600	1,000
Appropriation for Lincoln Institution.	33,400	33,400	33,400	33,400	33,400	33,400
Appropriation for Hampton Institute.	20,040	20,040	20,040	21,040	20,040	20,040
Total.....	\$228,259	\$363,214	\$376,264	\$530,905	\$562,640	\$560,218

The following table shows the average attendance on these Indian Schools under Sectarian Control for 1890, and the number of pupils allowed for in the grants of 1891.

	1890.	1891.
Roman Catholic.....	3,013	3,353
Episcopalian.....	212	295
Presbyterian.....	320	440
Congregational.....	217	247
Methodist.....	62	65
Lutheran.....	77	85
Mennonite.....	29	35
Unitarian.....	45	50
Friends.....	257	240
TOTAL	4,232	4,810

It will be seen that considerably more than one-half of the amount appropriated by Congress to denominational schools among the Indians is given to the schools under the care of one denomination, and this a denomination which has never claimed to represent over one-sixth of the population.

Last year in spite of protests three new Roman Catholic schools were specially appropriated for in addition to the already liberal estimates of the Department, and it is claimed to be true that although these added schools were not this year found in the Indian Bureau estimates they are expected to be granted. It is also understood that Congress will be asked to add still other sectarian schools to the list of those receiving special appropriations.

We make our earnest protest against this misappropriation of public funds.

We protest against the legalized friction with the present rational and American theory of the Indian Bureau for common-school and industrial education among the Indians with a view of preparing them for self-supporting citizenship, caused by appropriations for sectarian instruction, which in many notable instances has kept the tribes among whom it has prevailed helpless dependents.

We submit that it is undignified for a great nation to farm out its work among its wards to the sects, instead of doing its own work in a broad and liberal-minded manner.

Many of the Indians have been made to believe by some of their religious teachers that the United States Government is their enemy, and added to this baleful instruction is their inherited belief that they have been wronged by the nation. How better can the Government dissipate this wrong conception, and prove to the Indians that the Government authorities and the American people are their friends, than by making large and uniform provision for their education, moral, intellectual, and industrial, instead of establishing as many grades of treatment as there are sects sharing in Governmental appropriations?

We believe that such grants are all unconstitutional, and are utterly subversive of the letter and spirit of the First Amendment already quoted. The National Government, violating as we believe it does, its own Constitution by these sectarian grants, casts its influence in favor of denominational schools, and imperils thereby the integrity of the whole common-school system of the various States.

We protest against this use of public funds for the support of sectarian instruction because it is a menace to the American public school system.

A division of the public school moneys among the various sects means the destruction of our public schools, and this consummated means the overthrow of our civil institutions. The foundation of Republican government is the intelligence of its citizenship.

If the general government divides among the sects its common school funds, what hope is there that the integrity of the school fund in the States shall be kept inviolate and indivisible?

In this country denominational advantages should be gained and triumphs should be won by moral suasion, not by legislative influence, or by an appeal to political majorities.

The National League is rapidly extending its work by the formation of auxiliary leagues in different States, and the conviction is rapidly spreading that distinctively American institutions need protection, and that the status of the

American common free school, as one of the chief supports of our free institutions, must be speedily entrenched by national and State constitutional and legislative safeguards, or it will gradually but surely be crushed by sectarian encroachments. These truths are alarming to the thoughtful citizen, and only can be put aside by thoughtless political and temporizing expediency.

It is high time for a revival of Americanism that includes all who believe in our institutions, whether they be of native or foreign birth. We believe the time is at hand.

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Added Names.

Of the thousands of prominent citizens in different parts of the country, co-operating with us, and who are opposed to all sectarian appropriations made either by the General Government or by the States, and who have recorded their names with The National League, and have expressed their desire for the passage of the proposed XVI Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, we append one hundred representative names.

Charles Kendall Adams,

William H. Arnoux,

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Richard M. Hunt,
William Jay,
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Joseph F. Knapp,
A. J. Kynett,
Charles Lanier,

Abiel A. Low,
Charles Lyman,
C. C. McCabe,
John J. McCook,
R. S. MacArthur,
Willard F. Mallalieu,
Henry G. Marquand,
F. De Sola Mendes,
Ezra P. Mills,
J. Pierpont Morgan,
Fred'k Law Olmsted,
John E. Parsons,
John F. Plummer,
Henry C. Potter,
Horace Porter,
E. A. Quintard,
John Harsen Rhoades,
John D. Rockefeller,
D. B. St. John Roosa,
Russell Sage,
Jacob H. Schiff,
J. Edward Simmons,
Chas. Stewart Smith,
Charles Scribner,
Philip Schaff,
Homer B. Sprague,
J. Noble Stearns,
Edmund C. Stedman,
Richard S. Storrs,
J. S. T. Stranahan,
William Strong,
Josiah Strong,
Ellwood E. Thorne,
Charles L. Tiffany,
Chas. Edward Tracy,
Frederick Townsend,
Jonathan Trumbull,
Cornelius Vanderbilt,
Henry Villard,
John H. Vincent,
Francis A. Walker,
Francis Wayland,
H. L. Wayland,
Alexander S. Webb,
Herbert Welsh,
S. V. White,
E. Whittlesey.